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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8315th meeting of the Security Council, held on 23 July 2018, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council notes the conclusion of the voter registration process in Afghanistan on July 18, which according to preliminary data of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan saw more than 8.9 million Afghans register, including more than 3 million women, in order to exercise their democratic right to vote at the upcoming parliamentary and district council elections on 20 October 2018 and in the 2019 presidential elections.

"The Security Council recalls that the Afghan Government, political leaders, and the Independent Electoral Commission and Electoral Complaints Commission carry the primary responsibility to create the necessary conditions for credible elections to take place.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need to address remaining challenges and to accelerate progress in electoral preparations, which requires without further delay the completion of outstanding issues, including the approval of candidates to fill critical vacancies within the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission, the establishment of a central database of all registered voters that identifies irregularities, as well as the publication of a final list of candidates.

"The Security Council underscores the importance of developing sustainable democratic institutions in Afghanistan based on inclusive, transparent and credible elections, and stresses the need to promote the full and safe participation of women as well as members of minority groups, including ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, both as voters and candidates.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan and in this regard underscores its support to the Afghan electoral process as a fully Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process.

"The Security Council calls on all parties concerned to adhere to the fundamental requirements laid out by the electoral law and all other relevant regulations and to uphold the highest standards of integrity throughout this important and historic process, so that the final outcome reflects the will of the people of Afghanistan.

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"The Security Council emphasizes the central role of UNAMA, in cooperation with the wider UN system, and in close consultation and coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, in supporting the organization of elections and the strengthening of electoral reform efforts by providing technical assistance and capacity-building and by coordinating international assistance efforts.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of addressing sexual- and gender-based violence against female voters and candidates.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of a secure environment for conducting elections, condemns in the strongest terms those who resort to violence to obstruct the electoral process, including the Taliban and ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates, and commends the resiliency, progress, and exceptional courage displayed by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in their leading role in securing their country.

"The Security Council welcomes the commitment by civil society to conduct observation at every polling station to monitor voting, counting, tabulating, and transmission of results.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need for appropriate electoral observation missions to be in place, and welcomes the intention of international partners to provide support at the request of the Afghan Government, and calls on all parties to facilitate and respect the observers' work.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the ability of all Afghan citizens throughout Afghanistan to exercise their civil and political rights, and reiterates its continued support for the Afghan Government and people of Afghanistan in their pursuit of democratic development, prosperity and durable peace.

"The Security Council expresses the intention to continue to closely follow the electoral process, including progress on the electoral preparations, and in this regard looks forward to the thorough verification of registered voters following the completion of the registration process, and requests UNAMA to provide an update to council members on key developments and progress regarding electoral preparations within one month of the adoption of this statement."